

**Executive Committee for Highway Safety
Speed Working Group
Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2004**

Location:

Triangle Transportation Management Center, Trenton Road @ 2:00 p.m.

Committee Members in Attendance:

Col. Richard Holden	Kimberly Overton	Joe Geigle	Gaines Weaver
Bill Stout	Ron Allen	Doug Robertson	Ron Hughes
Liz Babson	Haywood Daughtry	Kevin Lacy	Cliff Braam

Scribe:

Cliff Braam

Minutes:

- The meeting began at approximately 2:10 p.m.

Task I – Welcome/Introductions

- Kevin opened the meeting, welcomed and thanked everyone for coming and participating. He provided some background information on why the group was there and highway safety issues in NC particularly as they related to crashes involving speed.
- Next everyone in the group introduced themselves, where they were from and a bit about their background and area of expertise. Name tents were also provided.
- Colonel Holden spoke about the importance of the issue of speed and how it affects so many people who are needlessly injured and killed in traffic crashes.

Task II – Overview Presentation

- Cliff gave a presentation providing background information on the Executive Committee for Highway Safety (ECHS), the accomplishments of the ECHS to date, the formation of the initial 6 Working Groups, and finally the role/charge of the working group and what was expected.

Task III– Speed Related Crashes; Data Presentation

- Kevin gave a presentation on specific data elements as related to crashes and fatalities involving speed in North Carolina as a base for the group to begin thinking about issues and solutions.

Task IV– Brainstorming/Open Discussion/

Both during and after the presentation on the data, there was a lot of discussion about the issue and specific areas of possible focus. Listed below are some of the major discussion points.

Name	Discussion
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to encourage and seek voluntary compliance from the public. Make obeying the speed limits something that the public wants to do for their own good.
Gaines & Liz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to see the data by facility type compared to the number of miles of the facility type (rates).
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cautioned against using purely rates due to the fact that if vehicle miles traveled (VMT) increase, then rates could actually decrease while the number of people being killed continued to increase.
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to look at the most reliable data we have; whether it is rates or raw numbers, neither or both. Speed is something we all do and we should take our own experiences into consideration and our decisions. i.e. Is the idea viable to me? Would it have an impact on me personally.
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What would it take for me personally to change my behavior?
Gaines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What percentage of the crashes/fatalities are caused by “problem” drivers and how do we accurately define the “problem” driver?
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We may be able to gain a better understanding of the “problem” driver when the issues of unlicensed and competent drivers is analyzed. There is presently a work group established for this area of focus.
Ron H.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is speed a political issues?
Colonel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to educate the legislators on the speed issue and how severe it really is. It may be beneficial to hold a session with the legislators at the appropriate time to let them know how speed affects so many people in the state.
Liz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Charlotte’s programs, success with the legislators came after support was obtained from the community at the grass roots level. The legislators saw that this was important to the community and an issue that they wanted addressed.
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to set speed limits that are reasonable to get buy in and respect from the public. i.e. Don’t build a highway that looks and feels like an interstate and sign it for 35 mph.
Kimberly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DA’s do not want to try speeding cases because Judges express that there are too many other cases of higher importance and often get upset with DA’s that do pursue speeding cases. this makes the remainder of the session of District Court difficult for an ADA that pursues a speeding case. The public knows what courts will reduce speeding tickets and which ones will not. We need to think about ways to change this.
Ron H.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are two parts of the equation that are traditionally overworked. Law enforcement and the courts. Can we set and administer fines without having to go through the courts?
Gaines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a way to circumvent or restrict DAs discretion on reducing or pleading speeding tickets in certain cases/situations?
Kimberly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts across the state are all different, some are more stringent than others.
Colonel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers often feel efforts are in vain when the cases get reduced or dismissed in court, especially in speeding cases where the original charges rarely are the final outcome.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to seek voluntary compliance. • Need to push public education, make people “want to drive safe”. • Show pictures of people who have been seriously injured/killed in crashes.
Ron H.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shock treatment has not been shown to have positive long term benefits.
Liz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will need to be a multi-faceted approach. Charlotte has an advisory committee comprised of both private and public entities.
Colonel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to make people conscious of their actions and enforcement is a major component.
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need a totally comprehensive, integrated plan to present to the Executive Committee. • Need to use the seriousness of the consequences to “sell” the plan. • Get people to individually make decisions. • This is not something that will be accomplished in 1-2 afternoon meetings. • We know that behaviors can be changed. Seat belt usage went from 15% to 86%.
Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Click It was not about writing tickets, it was about saving lives. • Click It was/is a long term program. • May need to identify corridors with increased fatalities and A injuries due to speed related crashes, increase enforcement, and get prosecutors to establish these as “no plea” zones. • Essentially establish a program like Click It. • A seep program that could grow.
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, seek voluntary compliance from the community, then focus on the “wild cards”.
Gaines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a “big stick” like we now have with alcohol cases.
Colonel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need to visit the driver education programs. • Look at what other states/countries are doing and benchmark their programs, equipment and training that has been successful.
Gaines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need consistency in posted advisory speed panels on curves. Some are posted at the maximum speed you can physically and successfully drive the curve, while others are posted at speeds well below how fast you can actually go.

- The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Action Items:

Name	Item
Cliff	Will e-mail the group updated contact information and meeting minutes.

Cliff	Additional data analysis on speed related crashes to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where alcohol, speeding and unbelted • Fatalities & crashes by age • day vs. night crashes • day vs. night single vehicle crashes
Cliff	Compare NC alcohol and speed numbers to national numbers to see if they are in line.
Liz	At next meeting will provide an overview on what Charlotte is doing to address speed related issues.
Ron A.	At next meeting will provide a brief overview of how speed and roadway design are related.
Everyone	Discuss data elements with staff and brainstorm on issues, solutions, etc. in preparation for the next meeting.
Everyone	Send agenda items to Cliff two weeks prior to next meeting date once it is scheduled.

NEXT MEETING: May 25th at 10:00, location TBD.